

Near-Earth Objects: Targets for Future Human Exploration, Solar System Science, and Planetary Defense.

Human exploration of near-Earth objects (NEOs) beginning circa 2025 - 2030 is one of the stated objectives of U.S. National Space Policy. Piloted missions to these bodies would further development of deep space mission systems and technologies, obtain better understanding of the origin and evolution of our Solar System, and support research for asteroid deflection and hazard mitigation strategies. This presentation will discuss some of the physical characteristics of NEOs and review some of the current plans for NEO research and exploration from both a human and robotic mission perspective.